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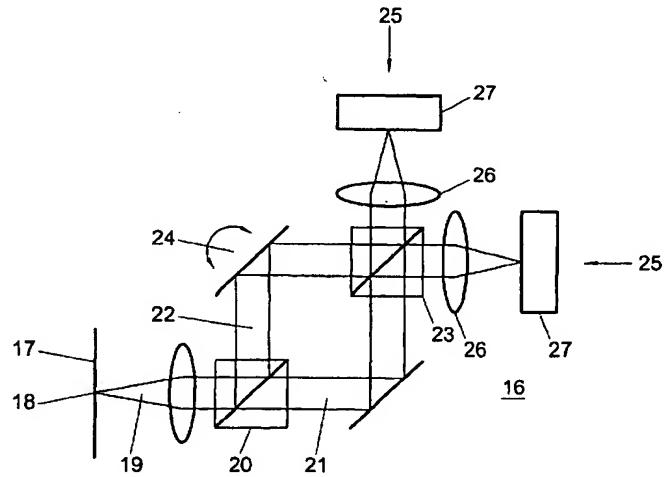
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(54) Title: METHOD FOR MEASURING CONTOUR VARIATIONS



(57) **Abstract:** A method for measuring a contour variation of a measuring area on an object. The method comprises the steps of: irradiating the measuring area by means of a light beam, wherein reflection or transmission of the beam occurs; splitting the transmitted or reflected beam; combining the split beams with each other and observing a fringe pattern representing a differential phase between the split beams; varying the phase of the split beams relative to each other, such that the differential phase is kept within the range of  $2\pi$ ; calculating an optical path length difference from the differential phase; and relating the optical path length difference to the contour variation of the object.

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